/113 cont./

526 between two men embracing each other, which is performed in a sitting position (see p. 233); the tug of war (see p. 244); and the throwing of wet earth at one another (see p. 244).

539 [115]

## IX. Myths and Legends

The following myths and legends were told me by the Surára chief Hewemãõ:

### The Creation of the Yanonámi

The earth already existed and was full of plants and animals, but as yet was without human beings. But one day the first man, Uruhí, came out of the leg of the xiapó, a small bird with black and yellow feathers similar to the japim. A short time later the bird-leg gave birth to a second man, then a third, a fourth, and finally a woman, Petá. These four men and the woman lived together in perfect harmony. Petá, to be sure, was the wife of Uruhí, the first-born, but the other three brothers also had the right to have sexual intercourse with her (552).

[835] 552. Among the Surára and Pakidái, the younger, unmarried brothers likewise have the right to have sexual intercourse with the wives of their elder brothers. Moreover, the members of both tribes believe that a woman is able to have strong children only if she has frequent intercourse with other men during her pregnancy.

[843]

After a year Petá gave birth to a strong, healthy boy who grew rapidly and called all four men "father" (553). The boy's

[801] 553. The Surára and Pakidái children also call the unmarried brother of their father, not uncle, but likewise father.

/209 cont./

596 591 [182] itself to an arrangement of this sort. In their seminomadic state there do not seem to be any sufficiently decisive economic factors to require a unilocal residence rule, which in a way would hinder a young man, after his marriage, from remaining in the group of his family of orientation or from leaving in order to found his family of procreation matrilocally, according to the particular circumstances. But what we are sure of is that the irregularities observed are precisely a result of the economic and technological changes which the Sanemá of the regions /210/ adjacent to the Makiritare are undergoing via the process of acculturation. The cultivation of the land, although still rudimentary, and the possibility of augmenting their properties have brought about as a natural consequence, not only greater stability and possibly a considerable demographic increase, but also the impetus which disrupts the balanced equilibrium present in the custom of choosing the postnuptial residence which is fundamental for the bilocal extended family (cf. Murdock, 1949, p. 38). So it is that one of the factors which has most contributed to bringing about disequilibrium among the Sanemá was the adoption of the Caribe agricultural system. The postmatrimonial moving from one local group to another was not of any particular importance in a nomadic society, but nowadays it presents certain difficulties not even suspected previously, for a man now has to leave his cultivated fields if he is to go with his wife. We are sure that the tendencies in the direction of the unilocal custom have their roots precisely in this economic change. Finally, the existence of the bilocal extended family among the Yanoama is in complete accord with the Hawaiian type of social organization which we are describing as typical for this tribe.

591 596 197 241 [601]

594 621 Without knowing a Sanemá nuclear family intimately, it is difficult to group with certainty the members of a local group solely on the basis of their family ties, particularly in a community in which polygamy, the sororate, the levirate, and a Hawaiian kinship system are practiced. There are occasions, however, on which the members of a nuclear family gather together: to eat, to sleep, etc., and, in spite of our not having full knowledge of Sanemá society, we can, with all this, say that the nuclear

/210 cont./

594 family exists as a definite cell in that tribe, assuming all the
621 functions and all the specific responsibilities of that social entity. Thus, there exists the formal arrangement of marriage, which sanctions sexual contact between the spouses and guarantees procreation. There exists economic co-operation among the members of the nuclear family, which organizes work and apportions the necessary subsistance and, in this way, injects persistence in the family's living together. There are [86] practically no tasks which exceed the capacity of the nuclear family and the children learn the way of life directly from their parents and elders.

594 The most visible center of the nuclear family is the fire
354 around which they eat and sleep. From here they go out to their work and, upon their return, reassemble at the fireside. After a long trip, the man takes the small sticks from his quiver and makes a fire; there is a new fire; a new home is established.

596 Each individual Sanemá belongs also to an extended family
621 made up according to the residence rules already explained. The local group /211/ consists of two or more of these extended families of the same bilateral kinsfolk and form /sic/ a band. This local group or band is the largest social unit to which [619] a Sanemá belongs. The terms "subtribe" and "tribe" which we use are artificial terms lacking in real meaning for the Sanemá. But the band is definitely a familiar concept for him, one which he knows very well and with which he identifies. The band guarantees economic and social stability, and its well-being benefits the individual member, who feels tied to it by a multitude of family ties.

621 Each local group has innumerable enemies, while the circle
628 of friends is extremely small. Contact between all of one group with a neighboring group is rare, but does sometimes occur. They sometimes get together for commercial reasons or at funeral ceremonies, but their friendship is weak and unstable.

• 601 We were unable, for lack of an informant, to obtain a list of
582 kinship terms. Our impression is that a Hawaiian system is involved.
600 One may not marry a female cross or parallel cousin. There are

/211 cont./ There are
601 personal names which an individual receives from the theurgist,
551 but the kinship term seems to be used more in daily contact be-
689 tween persons. It is considered an offense to mention the name
825 of a deceased person in the presence of any of his relatives, and,
as we mentioned before, kinship terms are extended even to speaking with certain animals during the hunt.

606 In general, dealings between persons are very free, with the exception of the strong prohibitive taboo which exists between the son-in-law and his mother-in-law and father-in-law. Usually, one must not approach one's wife's parents. Only in cases of emergency can this be done, thus breaking the custom. These cases of emergency come about, for instance, during a battle, when one of the persons is wounded.

597 The adoption of an orphan takes place informally when it is a matter of a small child. The family that adopts him takes him in like another one of its own members. Older children also live in a family of the group, but they are not adopted, properly speaking, for they are not given specific kinship denominations. We do not think that there are special terms to express a relationship of adoption.

554 Regarding the social structure, it seems that the main distinctions are those of sex and age. The man who carries out his daily tasks with dexterity enjoys great prestige among his peers, and those who are really successful in their work rise to the top of /212/ the social hierarchy. In Sanemá society the three theurgists which we shall mention later on enjoy high rank; but we must repeat the fact that the data regarding this matter which we present here are provisional and therefore subject to possible modification.

554 As we shall see, Sanemá society seems to have three different theurgists: a "magician" /mago/, a shaman, and a priest.
791 This last one possesses characteristics of a real specialist, since,
756 for the most part, he earns his living from his office. There is not
793 the least doubt but that the theurgists in general, and the shaman and priest in particular, represent the most influential position in Sanemá society; particularly if the two offices are carried out
000 by one and the same person. We were greatly surprised to find

/217 cont./

606 The husband helps economically the family of orientation of his wives, supplies them with produce from the conuco, but dealings with his wife's parents are reduced the most indispensable ones. When he meets his mother-in-law on the path, he changes his direction immediately, does not greet her, and would not dare to speak to her for anything. Between father-in-law and son-in-law there exists a cold friendship from which all manifestations of cordiality are absent. The same taboo exists between parents-in-law and daughter-in-law.

836 The Sanemá of the Erebato assured us that an unmarried young man could have sexual relations with all the unattached girls of his group and that very often the girls are the ones who [584] take the initiative in this. When a boy is attractive, he joins up with one or two girls, who /218/ in all frankness and good faith ask him to stay with them for a few nights more, offer him food, and hope that he will resolve to ask one of them to marry him.

593 It seems that in general women do not abandon their hus-
837 bands and confidently expect the spouse to behave in the same manner and not have extramarital sexual relations.

593 Frequently angry fights arise in the family out of passional
586 motives, to the point where the man no longer tolerates it and leaves the rancheria forever and eventually marries another woman in a distant pueblo.

595 Usually, only older men have several wives; polyandry
587 is not permitted. Widows, as a general rule, marry a brother of
607 the deceased husband, who takes his nieces and nephews under
[836] his protection. This custom does not cause any great problems, since the brother of the deceased has already had sexual intercourse with his sisters-in-law before marrying them, for he has
587 always considered them as possible wives. Nor do the children
593 find it difficult to accept their new father, whom they have al-
[601] ways called "father" and he has called them "children." In
[184] this way the Sanemá (and also the Waica, Surará, and Pakidai) are a society which allows polygamy, the sororate, and the levirate.

St Leyhese et al. D, E-5 (ca. 1960)1982 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18 Waica



Waica,[9] there seems to be a strong tendency towards bilocality. Although bilocal extended families are relatively rare,[10] their existence among the semi-nomadic Yanoama could very well be possible, since there do not exist any decisive economic factors which could strongly favor unilocal residence. Among the Sanemá of the Caura (incipient agriculturists) we have observed initial matrilocal with subsequent patrilocal residence and a rather formal initiation of common residence of the spouses. Polygyny is permitted and young girls are frequently married to men even before their first menstruation. The kinship system is of the Hawaiian type.

Local groups follow the suggestions of a headman in peacetime and receive orders from a war chief in wartime. There appear to exist at least two and possibly three different religious-medical practitioners among some of the subtribes, who (*hăwĭawan*) represent their community at the court of a deified Culture Hero, who (*sabli*) regulate the groups' relationship to a host of animal and plant spirits, and who (*kăilala*) cure physical ailments of mainly non-supernatural origin.[11] The *sabli* (shaboliwa) seems to be the most important practitioner of the Waica, among whom the *hăwĭawan* has not been observed.

*Physical appearance.* Two authors have recently reported on the occurrence of a great phenotypical variation among the Sanemá (Samatari)[12] and among the Waica.[13] They mention four different types with more or less specific physical features:

a. A minority pygmoid type with a general stature of less than 130 cm, light skin, fine-cut facies with a gay expression, small hands and small feet.
b. Relatively tall type, dark skinned, robust, stout, and with a wild facial expression.
c. Type of medium stature, round-headed, with a feminine expression, small nose, small mouth, and yellowish clay-colored skin. Some individuals have wavy hair and brown instead of black eyes.
d. "Mongoloid" and "semi-Tartaric" type with almond-shaped eyes, frowning expression, protruding forehead and pointed chin, thin beard, slim, and of medium stature.

We shall return to this observation in a later chapter.

9 Barlow, 1933, p. 478.
10 Murdock, 1949, p. 35.
11 Wilbert, 1961a.
12 Vinal, 1956, pp. 124-125.
13 Zamlin, 1959.

114 ments rather uncritically, largely because they support his own theory that 'Paleo-Indian' culture, Chibchan language, and low Diego gene frequency are correlated in South America. In treating Yąnomamö economy as 'Paleo-Indian' in nature, Wilbert ignores the only data based on field work bearing on Yąnomamö economic life--that reported by Zerries and Becher in the two monographs mentioned above.

Again, it is difficult to determine when Wilbert is reporting facts, when he is making theoretical conclusions, or when he is guessing. This is particularly true of his 114 • 601 comments on social organization and data relevant to analyzing it:

> We did not succeed, for lack of an informant, in obtaining a list of kinship terms. Our impression is that it would be an Hawaiian System. (1963:211. My translation. [His statements in other publications are quite emphatic on this point: "The kinship system is of the Hawaiian type." Layrisse, Layrisse, and Wilbert, 1962:82.])

The kinship terminology of the groups in the area visited by Wilbert is bifurcate-merging (Iroquois) in type (Migliazza, 1964), as it is in the upper Orinoco area.[1]

114 In addition to the field work conducted by these ethnologists, numerous travelers, adventurers, botanists,

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[1]Migliazza's publication was not available to Wilbert when the latter concluded that the Yąnomamö have an Hawaiian kinship terminology. A part of the discrepancy between Wilbert's data and that reported by Zerries (1964) and Becher (1960) stems from the fact that Wilbert's Sanema differ appreciably from the more southerly Yąnomamö groups. Wilbert, however, intends his generalizations on the Sanema to apply to all the Yąnomamö. I might point out that my own analysis applies to the Upper Orinoco and Mavaca River Yąnomamö. See Conclusions, Chapter 6.

835 terms for a number of men that were, genealogically, her distant agnates. She explained the usage by the fact that she had incestuous relationships with several of them when she was a young woman. Kaobawë told me that he had incestuous relationships with Hayamamasimi, his FaBrDa, but did not want the others in the village to know about it. In another case, a man married three girls who were his FaBrSoSoDa, i.e., his 'granddaughters.' The Yanomamö explanation of this case illustrates the relationship of the woman shortage to warfare
*621 and alliance. The people in question all live in Patanowë-
*623 tedi, a village that has numerous enemies, only one ally,
162 and a serious woman shortage. The parents of the girls in
562 question did not want them to marry into the village of the
*628 allies, as they had given a number of women to the allies
584 already. The man, Ishiweiwë, had no spouse and could not
582 get one from the allies. So, the parents of the girls stopped
• 601 calling Ishiweiwë by the appropriate consanguineal terms
835 and began calling him by affinal terms suited to the marriage of
183 the three girls to him. The girls, in turn, stopped calling him grandfather. Ishiweiwë married just one of the girls at first; after she died, he married the other two, as he already called them 'wife' by virtue of the fact that he had married their sister. The initial marriage was the major hurdle. After he married the first girl and the kinship terms were

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835 the mother-in-law category are not avoided, nor are FaSi or MoBrWi. The implications of this last fact for Homans and Schneider's work are obvious.

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appropriately adjusted, he had no difficulty marrying the remaining two.

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[607]

The close ties between siblings of the opposite sex and between brothers-in-law are also reflected in the fact that incestuous relationships are not severely punished. Thus, Kɑobɨwɨ was known to be having an affair with his classificatory sister, Krɨ̈mi, but her husband overlooked the matter. Incest is not severely punished. The Yɑnomamö

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rely on the internal sanctions of shame and conscience, bolstered supernaturally by the fear that incestuous affairs prevent the release of the soul of the guilty party during

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cremation. As a counter measure, they dismember the body of someone known to have committed incest during his life time, and burn the parts of the body a much longer time than

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they normally would have otherwise. Some of the Yɑnomamö avoid incestuous affairs, according to Kɑobawɨ, because one of their ancestors turned into a sloth (ihama) after having committed incest. Kɑobawɨ himself initially denied having incestuous affairs because incest (yaweremou), as he put it, ". . . is the most despicable thing possible." Later, he

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confided that he had fornicated with his FaBrDa on a number of occasions and did not seem particularly concerned about the matter, except his fear that I would tell his wife. Other data suggest that incest, far from being feared, is

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widely practiced. In particular, kinship usage varies considerably from the expected usage predictable from genealogical data and the Iroquois terminology. Whenever I

835 investigated discrepant kinship usage I found that the termi-
• 601 nology changed because of incestuous relationships between my
183 informant (or his close kinsman) and the members of the local lineage in question. I have not investigated all discrepant usages, but the high incidence of the terminological aberrations suggests that incest is widely practiced.

835 Incestuous affairs and marriages occur largely because
601 of the woman shortage. I have already mentioned that Ishiweiwä
183 of Patanowä-tedi married his three 'granddaughters' because he
582 could not find a wife of the appropriate category. A similar
[162] situation occurred in Bisaasi-tedi. Reromawä, one of the
[564] important men in the lower group of Bisaasi-tedi, has redefined a number of his classificatory daughters as sisters,[1] thereby making it possible for his sons to marry their children, otherwise incestuous marriages. His oldest son, Bäkäböwä, technically married his FaDaDa, but because his father had redefined the mother of Bäkäböwä's wife as 'sister,' the marriage was appropriate within their marriage rules.

837 The woman shortage is remedied by illicit affairs
*621 within the village. These affairs are the major cause of
578 feuds and village splits. During the 15 months covered by
[72.1] my field work five club-fights occurred. Four of them were over women who had been caught in illicit affairs, and in one case, the village split into hostile factions that began

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[1]See Chapter 4 for detailed discussion of this.

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162 In addition to genealogical distance and size of descent groups, demographic factors promote ambiguity in the relationships between males within a local descent group. For reasons of differential fertility, infanticide, warfare mortality, or chance, some local descent groups are larger than others (contain more males) and are, therefore, more powerful. Others may be relatively large, but contain more females than males. Still others may be very small and contain either all males or
613 all females. Since Yąnomamö kinship terminology is classificatory
• 601 (Iroquois), all agnatically related males of the same generation
602 call each other 'brother'; parallel cousins, no matter how remote genealogically, are not terminologically distinguished from brothers. Despite the terminological usage, relationships between such agnates varies considerably.

613 Problems of agnatic priority in the disposition of
602 females arise, for example, when a man with no actual brothers
*621 gives his daughters away in marriage. If he has sons, the
584 sons would prefer that the girls be given to members of other
582 local descent groups who are most likely able to reciprocate with women. As the father has no actual brothers, his more distant agnates put pressure on him to give the girls to a descent group to which they themselves are linked by marriage ties, for they stand to benefit by future reciprocities. Situations such as this arise when a single man finds himself in the same village with a group of agnates that are distantly related to him, but who themselves constitute an important political bloc within the village. Although the agnates are

disposition of these women and their children, a factor that did not contribute to the amity of relationships between the two agnatically related descent groups.[1]

A girl's marriage is arranged by her close male kinsmen. Her father has the greatest influence in the decision as to which man she will be given. If the man had adult sons, their opinion can overrule the decision of the father. If a girl marries within the village, she can depend on her agnates for protection against a cruel husband. Ideally, a woman prefers to marry her FaSiSo or her MoBrSo.[2] If the marriage rule is not followed, women prefer to be given to a non-kinsman within the village.

Men are obliged to perform bride service in the village of their inlaws, after which they may take their wife back to their natal village. Occasionally a woman leaves her natal village to seek a husband in another village, but this is always against the wishes of the girl's agnates. Such situations usually develop into wars between the village of the girl and the village that took the girl. The war between

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[1] See Chapter 4 for a more detailed discussion of this incident.

[2] By FaSiSo I do not exclusively mean the biological relative, although he, too, would be included. By extending their kinship terminology, the Yanomamö also include non-consanguines in these categories of relatives. For example, a young man in Bisaasi-tedi married his FaBrWiBrDa while I was in the field. To him, the girl was his MoBrDa because FaBr was 'father' and 'father's wife' was 'mother'; the girl, therefore, was MoBrDa.

584 affair with his wife. The parties in question armed themselves with sharpened clubs and faced each other in the center of the village, but actual fighting was averted. Despite the legitimacy of Rerebawë's claims, no one stepped forward to take his side in the feud, so he backed down. After this incident, Rerebawë threatened to kill Koima, but the headman dissuaded him. Koima and her mother then fled to Monou-tedi and took refuge with kinsmen there, reducing the probability of Rerebawë shooting Koima. Her mother tried to coax her into abiding by the wishes of her kinsmen and go to Rerebawë, but she obstinately refused. She ultimately eloped with Bäkotawë, and the two of them fled to a distant village on the Padamo River. Rerebawë discovered where they had gone and attempted, unsuccessfully, to recover Koima. If she returns to Bisaasi-tedi she will be given to Rerebawë, who will have ample reason to thrash her soundly.

## B. Yanomamö Kinship[1]

602 The structural relationships between descent groups within Yanomamö villages can be expressed in terms of dyadic kin ties. Considerable theoretical attention has been devoted to this analytical procedure in recent structural treatments

[1] Migliazza (1964) published a kinship diagram for the Uraricaa Yanomamö. Although the terms differ from those current among the Upper Orinoco Yanomamö, the pattern (Iroquois) is the same. I defer discussion of the complete kinship terminology to a later publication, as there are enough peculiarities in usage to warrant a more complete treatment than would be appropriate here.

of social organization,[1] and in analyses of particular societies.[2] It is not assumed here that the nature of the social organization itself stems from the nature of the sentiments associated with particular dyadic kin ties, as was implied in Homans and Schneider's work (1955). Dyadic ties are a product of political, military, ideological and economic forces that shape Yąnomamö social organization, and reflect, rather than cause, that organization.

Of the large number of logically possible kinship dyads, only a few have structural relevance to this analysis. In particular, ties between agnates and ties between brothers-in-law must be considered to render intelligible the mechanics of Yąnomamö social organization.

Ties between distantly related agnates are the most ambiguous, and the ones that usually break when villages split. Conversely, ties between closely related agnates are strong and less likely to be severed in village splits.

Of the affinal ties, those linking brothers-in-law to each other are of the greatest structural importance and are often stronger than ties between distantly related agnates. Secondarily, ties between a man and his son-in-law are strong, but have fewer structural consequences than either brother-in-law (shoriwë) or brother (aiwë, osheya) ties.

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[1] Levi-Strauss, 1963, Ch. 2; Needham, 1962, Ch. 2.

[2] Leach, 1957.

593 684 the enraged husband struck his wife in the face with a burning log, severely burning her mouth. Burning is a common punishment, and many women bear immense scars from wounds inflicted by enraged husbands. Just before I left the field [578] a fight developed in Patanowë-tedi between a man and his wife's lover. The lover was killed in the fight and the woman's husband punished her by cutting off her ears with a [165] machete. Some women have been killed by enraged husbands, but in most of these cases, the deaths resulted from wounds that were not intended to be fatal.

609 613 *621 *628 [578] Despite the fact that the tie between spouses is weak, marriages create strong ties between a man and his sister's husband. This tie is of great significance in the social organization of the Yąnomamö, as it is stable, well defined, non-ambiguous and politically important. The brother-in-law (shoriwë) tie is the key link in alliances between local descent groups, both within and between villages.

609 • 601 The term shoriwë (brother-in-law, MoBrSo, FaSiSo, friend) is used constantly by Yąnomamö men when they address any new male acquaintance. Shoriwë implies a set of obligations and duties between the speakers. One can depend on his shoriwë for material goods and gifts, and a request for such items from a shoriwë is not easily denied: shoriwë is, in addition to goods-giver, wife-giver. The Yąnomamö use this [797] [609] [101] term for foreigners as well; they use it so frequently that the Salesian Missionaries who have recently contacted a few

609 groups of Yąnomamö have begun referring to the entire tribe
601 as "Los Shori." The Yąnomamö address the missionaries with
799 this term hoping to maximize their chances of obtaining
[609 desirable manufactured goods such as machetes and axes.
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609 Men who are not related by blood constantly remind
52 each other of obligations when they use this kinship term.
601 A brother-in-law deserves respect, fair treatment, and gratitude. As the term is reciprocal, a conversation between two shoriwë is punctuated frequently by these constant reminders that each owes the other goods, services and respect by virtue of the fact that they stand in wife-giver/wife-receiver relationship to each other. Such conversations, usually about material goods or women, strike the outsider as something of verbal contests to determine which of the two speakers is more of a shoriwë than the other, i.e., who owes the other more goods, services, gratitude and generosity. One who has actually given a sister to the other's group has an advantage, in a trading sense, as he can more legitimately claim goods from the wife receiver.

*628 When men visit the village of an ally to beg, trade or
574 participate in feasts, they call all non-related men of that
609 village 'brother-in-law,' emphasizing the fact that they
601 stand in wife-giver relationship to them, and deserve, therefore, the generosity of the hosts.
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*628 Alliances between villages involve, in addition to
527 military aid, mutual feasting and trading. It must be
574 remembered that alliances, no matter how many marriage ex-
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593 *621 important in the organization of village life as ties between male agnates, but a man's sisters prefer to stay in his faction when the village splits.

593 • 601 Males consider their role as sister's protector with some seriousness, and are prompt to defend her against sever mistreatment. The amity between siblings of the opposite sex is reflected in kinship usage. A man will frequently refer to his sister, despite her age, as owasimi, a term that may be translated as 'darling little female relative.' The term is used by both sexes to refer to their female children, nieces, sisters, daughters and granddaughters. There is a corresponding term for younger male kinsmen, owasiwë, but a man never uses it to refer to post-pubescent brothers, with whom he is generally reserved and whom he treats with coolness.

593 561 Brothers are close to each other, in an affective sense, only when their relative ages are considerably different. A man is indulgent to very young brothers, but as they enter into manhood, behavior toward them changes gradually 881 [881] to reserve and respect. Although there is no rite de passage for males, one can tell when a boy is approaching manhood; the first indication is the young man's display of anger when someone uses his name. The surest indication that a boy has entered manhood is name avoidance; when no one dares use his name in reference or address, the boy is an adult. Young men tend to be touchy and impulsive, as they are obliged to demonstrate their manhood by their ability to coerce others with threats of fierceness, and the use of

593 602 613 agnates of similar age tend to compete, rather than cooperate, with each other in the affairs of the group. Each behaves in such a way that it is obvious to all that he is not being bossed around by his equals. Finally, this competition and lack of solidarity is even more pronounced when there are two or more local descent groups of the same lineage within the village.

*621 601 *628 591 124 Co-residence as a factor in promoting solidarity can be illustrated by kinship usage. One of my female informants, Kpobawä's wife, used affinal terms for a number of Patanowä-tedi men who were technically her agnates. I was certain that my genalogies were correct, so I re-investigated the usage. I discovered that she used 'distant' kinship terms for these 'brothers' because they lived in a different village, but that she had called them by brother terms when they lived together in Patanowä-tedi. She explained that she would again use brother terms if the two villages were to re-unite. Although the terms for agnates normally do not change when a distant agnate joins a local descent group, the co-efficient of solidarity does.

*628 602 613 726 The weakness of the tie between distantly related agnates can also be demonstrated with data on fighting. After the Patanowä-tedi separated from the Bisaasi-tedi and the Monou-tedi in the early '40s, hostilities between the two groups developed. Each group, however, was similar in composition[1] in that each comprised local descent groups of the

[1]See Figure 3, Chapter IV, and Appendix A for the breakdown of the populations of these villages by lineage membership.

*621 *628 602 121 122 internal feuding that promotes splitting, and threat of raids from other groups that inhibits village splitting and/or promotes the establishment of alliances with other groups. These two forces shape the composition and structure of Ɣnomamɛ̈ villages; that is, these two forces impinge on kinship relationships and together with these latter determine the nature of the Ɣnomamɛ̈ village.

*621 *628 122 I will show in Chapter V that larger villages fragment into smaller groups when internal feuding becomes particularly intense, but are occasionally forced to re-unite when warfare threatens the splinter groups. Ɣnomamɛ̈ villages would remain small if there were no military forces working on them. The Patanowɛ̈-tedi, for example, attempted to split into three groups after separating from the Bisaasi-tedi;[1] the three factions re-combined, however, when one of them was attacked by the Hasaböwɛ̈-tedi. Similarly, the non-Patanowɛ̈-tedi faction of the split (Bisaasi-tedi and Monou-tedi) likewise split into smaller factions after the threat of raids from the outside subsided. Again, these recombined when threat of raids was imminent.

*621 582 Irrespective of the conditions of the splitting, the newly formed villages approximate a dual organization of inter-marrying moieties in structure. This form of organization is implicit in the Iroquois kinship terminology, sister exchange, and ambilateral cross-cousin marriage rules. Dual

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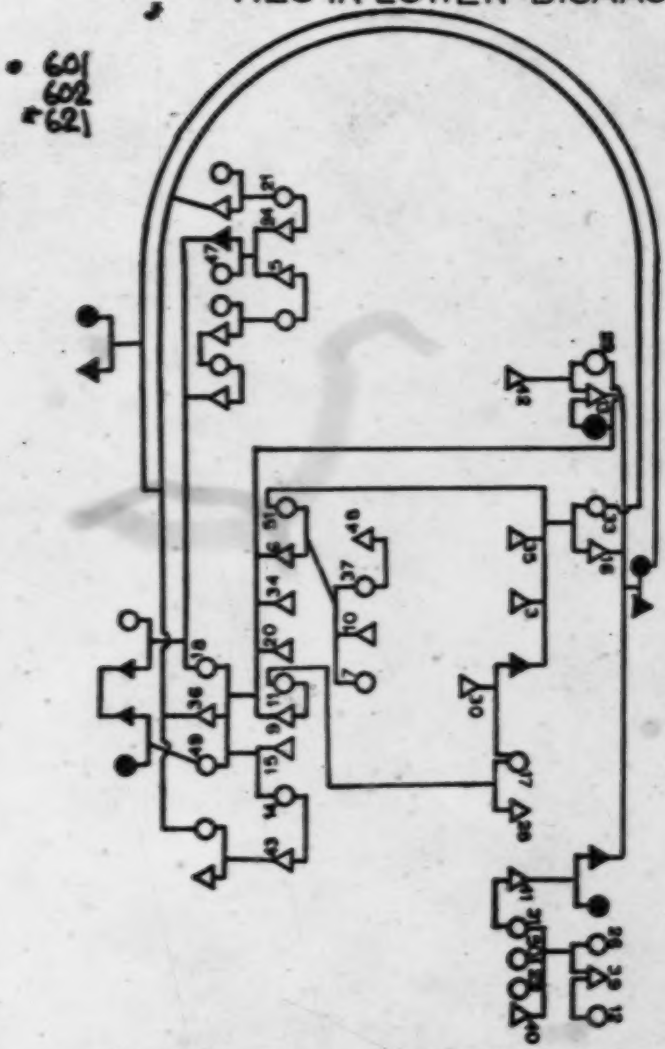
[1] See Map C and Chapter V.

FIG. 2 FACTION STRUCTURE BY KINSHIP TIES IN LOWER BISAASI-TEDI



Faction A Faction B

the kinship system to his advantage, putting all adult men in the village in a subordinate position to himself. Let us briefly examine the composition of this village.

Figure 2 shows the ties between the two lineages over three generations: the individuals in both lineages are tied to each other by consanguineal as well as affinal ties. In a negative sense, the village is characterized by an absense of remotely-related agnates that might constitute a challenge to Reromawë for leadership. All agnates within each faction are closely related to each other, and their mutual rights and obligations in the political affairs of the village are well defined. The hangers-on, on the other hand, are related to males of the two core lineages by stable, but subordinate, affinal ties such as son-in-law or brother-in-law. Reromawë is a particularly capable leader on the basis of his personal qualifications alone.[1] His position as leader is bolstered by the nature of the ties that link him, individual by individual, to every adult male in the village. He has four adult sons to support his position. Equally significant, he has manipulated the kinship system and 'changed' the generation of a number of his kinswomen so as to advance his position as leader. He redefined two classificatory daughters as 'sisters,' making it possible to arrange marriages between his own children and the children of these women. He was able to do this because many of the

[1] His son, Bëkëbowë, is gradually assuming some of the functions of leadership, as Reromawë is getting old.

actual brothers of these women were killed in the 1950-51 treacherous feast,[1] and the women therefore had few agnates to contest Reromawë's actions; his rights to dispose of these women increased after their brothers were killed in the feast. Because of the previous marriages between the members of the Sha and Tom lineages, Reromawë was already MoBr to the politically most important males in the Tom lineage, and he could command respect from them by virtue of the fact that he was of the ascending generation and principal wife-giver to them. He in fact gave two daughters to one of these men. When he re-defined one of his classificatory daughters as sister, he advanced his position in two ways. First, he then became shoriwë to the man that was married to this sister (the man was already SiSo to Reromawë), compounding the cognatic tie (SiSo) that linked them with an important affinal tie (shoriwë). Second, he was able then to claim a daughter of this 'sister' as a wife for his own son (despite the fact that it was incestuous), creating additional stable ties between the two lineages on another generational level.

In another, similar, case, Reromawë re-defined a different classificatory daughter as 'sister,' making it possible for her son to marry his daughter. This was a strategic move, for the man involved was of the Hor lineage, a dominant political group in Upper Bisaasi-tedi and Monou-tedi. Thus, by manipulating the kinship system, Reromawë advanced his own position as village leader and managed to

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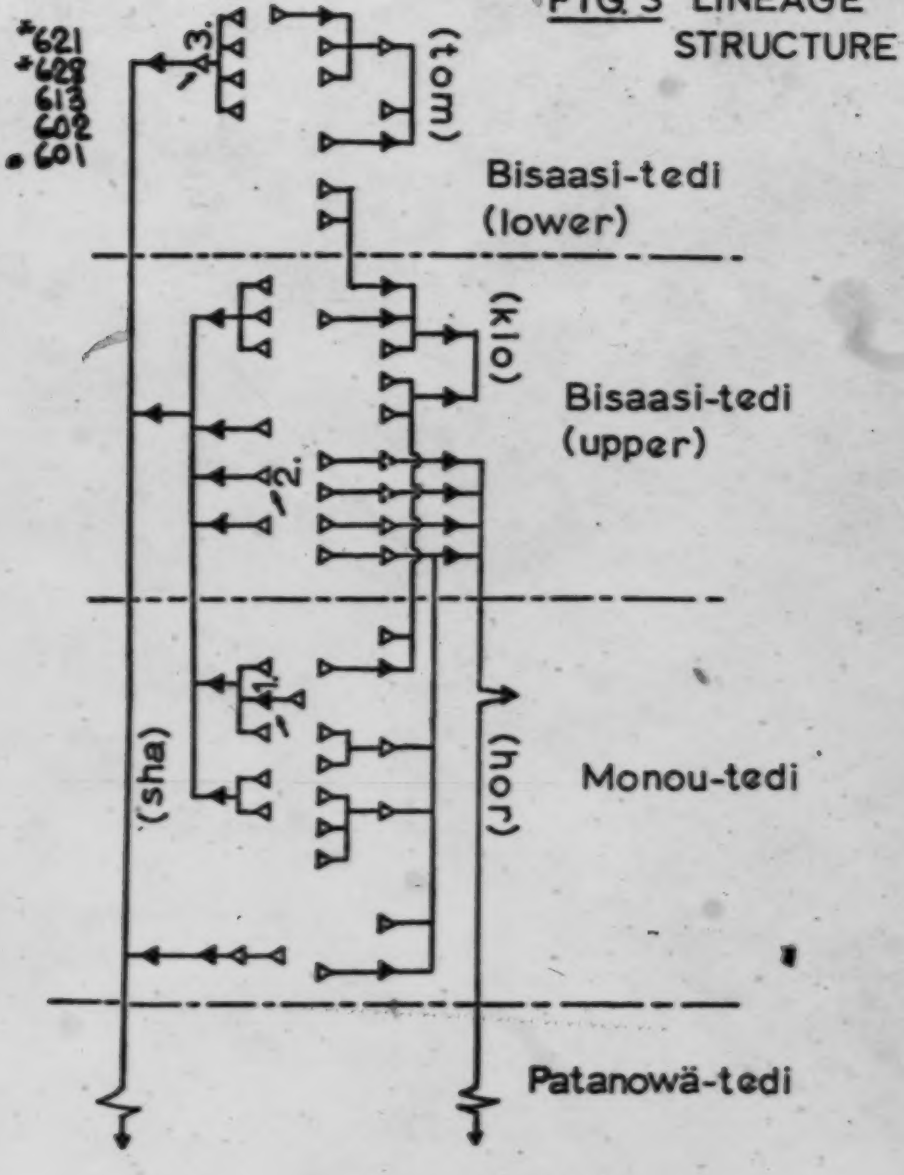
[1] See Chapter V.

FIG 3 LINEAGE STRUCTURE



# APPENDIX A

## [P.215] Genealogy of Lower Bisaasi-tedi

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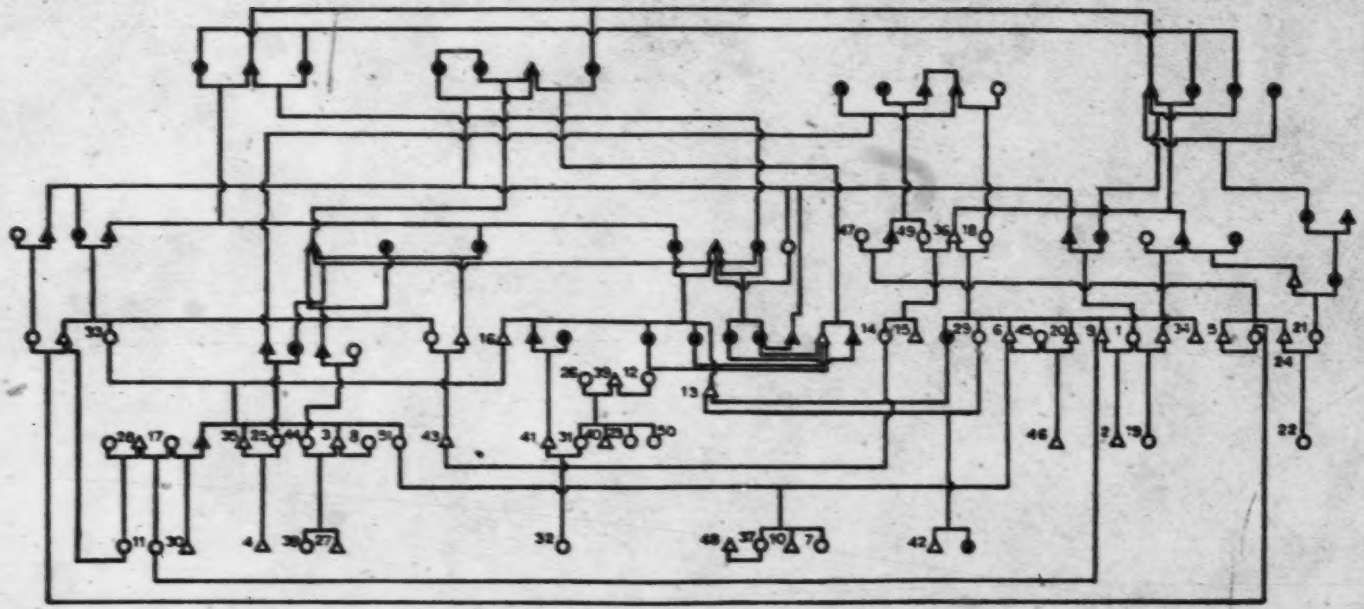

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I overlooked this incident I would have invited them to take even greater liberties with my goods in the future. I crossed the river, docked amidst their dugouts, and shouted for the Indians to come out and see me. A few of the culprits appeared, mischievous grins on their faces. I gave a spirited lecture about how hard I had worked to put those boards in my canoe, how I had paid a machete for the wood, and how angry I was that they destroyed my work in their haste to cross the river. I then pulled out my hunting knife and, while their grins disappeared, cut each of their canoes loose, set it into the current, and let them float away. I left without further ado and without looking back.

They managed to borrow another canoe and, after some effort, recovered their dugouts. The headman of the village later told me with an approving chuckle that I had done the correct thing. Everyone in the village, except, of course, the culprits, supported and defended my action. This raised my status.

Whenever I took such action and defended my rights, I got along much better with the Yąnomamö. A good deal of their behavior toward me was directed with the forethought of establishing the point at which I would react defensively. Many of them later reminisced about the early days of my work when I was "timid" and a little afraid of them, and they could bully me into giving goods away.

Theft was the most persistent situation that required me to take some sort of defensive action. I simply could not keep everything I owned locked in trunks, and the Indians came into my hut and left at will. I developed a very effective means for recovering almost all the stolen items. I would simply ask a child who took the item and then take that person's hammock when he was not around, giving a spirited lecture to the others as I marched away in a faked rage with the thief's hammock. Nobody ever attempted to stop me from doing this, and almost all of them told me that my technique for recovering my possessions was admirable. By nightfall the thief would either appear with the stolen object or send it along with someone else to make an exchange. The others would heckle him for getting caught and being forced to return the item.

With respect to collecting the data I sought, there was a very frustrating problem. Primitive social organization is kinship organization, and to understand the Yąnomamö way of life I had to collect extensive genealogies. I could not have deliberately picked a more difficult group to work with in this regard: They have very stringent name taboos. They attempt to name people in such a way that when the person dies and they can no longer use his name, the loss of the word in the language is not inconvenient. Hence, they name people for specific and minute parts of things, such as "toenail of some rodent," thereby being able to retain the words "toenail" and "(specific) rodent," but not being able to refer directly to the toenail of that rodent. The taboo is maintained even for the living. One mark of prestige is the courtesy others show you by not using your name. The sanctions behind the taboo seem to be an unusual combination of fear and respect.

I tried to use kinship terms to collect genealogies at first, but the kinship terms were so ambiguous that I ultimately had to resort to names. They were quick to grasp that I was bound to learn everybody's name and reacted, without my knowing it, by inventing false names for everybody in the village. After having spent several months collecting names and learning them, this came as a disappointment to me: I could not cross-check the genealogies with other informants from distant villages.

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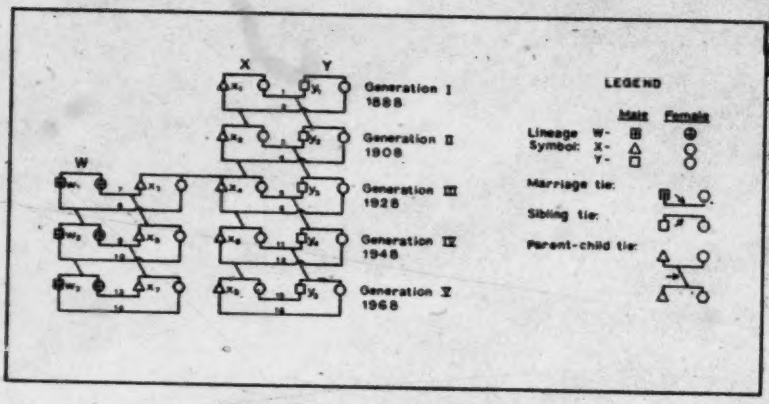


*Fig. 3–1. Ideal Yąnomamö marriage pattern.*

Fig. 3–1 can be presumed to represent the organization of a particular village over five generations, starting in the year 1888. Let us assume that the village originated in that year when individuals $x_1$ (and his sister, not numbered) and $y_1$ (and his sister) broke away from a larger village and established their own garden at some new location. Thus, in the year 1888, the village was comprised of two groups of kinsmen, X and Y. These two kinship groups are called lineages, the distinctive features of which I will discuss later.

In generation I, $x_1$ married the sister of $y_1$ and, in exchange, gave his own sister to $y_1$ as wife. This marriage practice is called *brother-sister* exchange and characterizes Yąnomamö marriage behavior. A man is under considerable obligation to *reciprocate* a woman to the kinship group from which he has taken one. In Fig. 3–1, $x_1$ married $y_1$'s sister and reciprocated the exchange by giving his own sister to $y_1$. Because of this obligation of reciprocity, kinship groups become interdependent socially and form pairs of woman-exchanging kin groups. These paired kinship groups are discussed below in the context of village fissioning.

In generation II of Fig. 3–1, the village still contains only two groups of intermarrying kinsmen. These are the children of the individuals who founded the village. The reciprocal exchanges of women between the two groups of kinsmen (lineages X and Y) continue in the second generation, $x_2$ getting his wife from lineage Y and vice versa. Like their fathers, $x_2$ and $y_2$ exchanged sisters. It will be noted at this point that $x_2$ has married his mother's brother's daughter, who is simultaneously his father's sister's daughter.[1] This is a logical consequence of the fact that there are only *two* lineages in

[1]This is called bilateral cross-cousin marriage. See glossary for definitions. Hereafter the following abbreviations will be used, following Murdock, 1949: Mo—mother; Fa—father; Br—brother; Si—sister; So—son; and Da—daughter. Thus, "mother's brother's daughter" is simply MoBrDa.

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the village, the members of which being related to each other as brother and sister, and the fact that individuals must marry outside their own lineages.

The important features of the lineages X and Y are now clearly visible in generation II: The lineages are patrilineal and exogamous. That is, males and females belong to the lineage of their father (patrilineality), and individuals must marry people who belong to a different lineage (exogamy). This can be seen more clearly in the symbols used in Fig. 3–1. All males of lineage X are designated by triangles ($x_1$, $x_2$, $x_3$ . . . $x_8$), and all females of lineage X are designated by hexagons. Similarly, all males of lineage Y are designated as squares and all females by circles. Males of lineage X marry females of lineage Y. Their children belong to lineage X because their *father* (patrilineality) is of lineage X.

The Yąnomamö kinship system also reflects the rules of lineage exogamy, brother-sister exchange and reciprocity. Their kinship system is called the "bifurcate merging" type with "Iroquois" cousin terms (see Glossary). Within each generation, all the males of one lineage call each other "brother," and all the women call each other "sister." Males of lineage X call males of lineage Y "brother-in-law" and are eligible to marry their sisters. In fact, the males of lineage X call the females of lineage Y "wife" *whether or not they marry them*. This is likewise true for the males of lineage Y with respect to the females of lineage X. This brings us to another important Yąnomamö marriage rule: A male must marry a woman of the category called *suaböya*—"wife." This is called a *prescriptive* marriage rule.[2] To state it more precisely, Yąnomamö society is characterized by a rule that enjoins a man to marry a woman of a specific kinship category; he has no choice with respect to the category.

There is an important controversy over the meaning and implications of the term "prescriptive." I have given the definition held by British anthropologists generally, by Needham (1962*a*:9) in particular. This definition emphasizes the fact that men have no choice with respect to the category of women from which their wives must come, that men are forbidden to marry women of other categories, and that the society itself is said to be characterized by the prescriptive rule. The opposition to this definition comes largely from certain American anthropologists, who maintain that a society can only be said to have a prescriptive marriage rule when a high percentage (close to 100 percent) of the people marry according to the rule (see Coult and Hammel 1963:291). The issues involved are not quite as simple as this, but a glimmering of the area of contention can be seen in an example provided by Leach (1965). Rephrasing his example, the rule (in our society) "thou shalt not kill" is like the rule (among, say, the Yąnomamö) "thou shalt marry a woman of category A." These rules can be said to exist in the respective societies irrespective of the homocide rate in New York or the frequency of aberrant marriages in a Yąnomamö village. That is, Leach (and Needham) maintain that one cannot discover such a rule by counting examples of murder (or, rather, "non-murder") or marriages of men to women of category A. The more basic issue, however, is the

[2]Professor Lévi-Strauss, who read an earlier draft of this chapter, quite correctly pointed out that to say a marriage system is "prescriptive" is to say no more than "a man must marry a marriageable female," which is a tautology. Nevertheless, we must have some way to distinguish a system that permits marriage with only a single category of women from those that permit marriage with women of several categories. By showing what is meant by the Yąnomamö category *suaböya*, as I have attempted to do in Fig. 3–2, the reader will gain some idea of what is meant by that marriage type. I have used the term "prescriptive" because it is the current usage.

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meaning of, in this case, "category A." It is customary to represent primitive kinship categories in models (for example, Fig. 3–1) by their closest biological equivalents in *our own kinship system*. Many critics of Needham's definition of prescription fail to appreciate the fact that *FaSiDa* and *MoBrDa* in a model like the one given in Fig. 3–1 represent just *two* of several kinds of kinswomen who fall into the prescribed category. That is, they interpret the native's kinship category from the narrow point of view of one of that category's biological meanings in *our own kinship system*. (I have given ten examples of actual Yąnomamö marriages in Fig. 3–2, discussed later, to illustrate what the categories FaSiDa and MoBrDa mean to the Yąnomamö.) The use of Needham's definition of prescription to characterize Yąnomamö marriage rules can be justified, therefore, on several grounds. First, the Yąnomamö assert that a man must marry a woman of the *suaböya* category. Second, of the six primary categories used by men to classify female relatives, five of them embrace women who stand in incestuous relationship to the male speaker, and he is forbidden to marry any woman that falls into any of these five additional categories. Third, we will see below how closely the alternative definition of prescription fits the Yąnomamö, using their own notions of kinship to reckon relationships between males and females.[3]

In Fig. 3–1, marriageable women are related to their husbands as both FaSiDa and MoBrDa; this is an artifact of the way in which the model is drawn. These two kinds of kinswomen are the closest biological equivalents in our kinship system for the Yąnomamö term "*suaböya*:" "wife." It must be emphasized, however, that given the classificatory nature of the Yąnomamö kinship system (for example, men of the same generation and of the same lineage are "brothers"), there are several ways to be related to a woman as "wife."

Something new has happened in generation III. A man ($w_1$) from a distant village, along with his sister, has joined the group. Both he and his sister have married into lineage X. Thus, there are three lineages represented in the village (W, X, and Y), and the *dual organization* characterizing generations I and II is now lost.[4] A Yąnomamö village can incorporate new lineages into its social life by an extension of marriage ties to its members. As can be seen from Fig. 3–1, the same rules—exogamy, reciprocity, patrilineal descent, and brother-sister exchange—that characterize the behavior of the members of lineages X and Y also hold for the members of the new lineage, W. The incorporation of lineage W takes place this way. $W_1$ joined the village in 1928 (generation III) because $x_3$ and $x_4$ promised him one of their sisters. As shown in Fig. 3–1, he did, in fact, marry one of their sisters and gave, in exchange, one of his sisters to $x_3$.

This (potentially) brings about an important structural change in the village with

[3]For an excellent summary of the various arguments concerning "prescriptive alliance," see Maybury-Lewis 1965*a*.

[4]A society is said to have dual organization when, for example, it is comprised of two intermarrying kinship groups, such as lineages X and Y in generations I and II of Fig. 3–1. In some societies the intermarrying kin groups are named, for example, "Bear Clan (or Moiety)" and "Thunderbird Clan (or Moiety)." The Yąnomamö do not have named kinship groups such as this. Dual organization is, however, implied in their kinship terminology and marriage rules and, as will be seen, villages tend to have two (and only two) politically dominant lineages that intermarry. In short, the Yąnomamö village tends to be comprised *in fact* of two dominant kinship groups but lacks some of the ideology, such as named pairs of intermarrying kin groups, of classical dual organization. See: Maybury-Lewis, 1960 and 1967; Lévi-Strauss, 1963, Chapter VIII; Nimuendajú and Lowie, 1927; and Malinowski, 1926, for further descriptions and analyses of societies having dual organization.

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*Fig. 3–2. Selected genealogies illustrating actual Yanomamö marriage cases.*

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analysis of reciprocal marriage exchanges between such groups and the obligations implied in such exchange is seriously hampered. In short, if Yąnomamö marriage exchanges over a number of generations and the kinship basis of village fissioning are examined, the data support Leach's arguments. They do not, however, invalidate Fortes' argument that blood ties create some solidarity, but they do call into question the contention that blood ties by definition, or, rather, on "first principles," account exclusively for the solidarity occurring between lineages.

In summary, Fig. 3–1 represents a number of important features of Yąnomamö social organization. First, people reckon descent through males and are grouped into exogamous, patrilineal lineages. These are called *mashi* by the Yąnomamö, although none of them bear distinctive names.[7] Second, members of these lineages tend to intermarry with the members of a second lineage over a number of generations, being bound to them by obligations to reciprocate women in marriage. This results in a dual organization of kinsmen within the village, whose residents fall into one or the other of the two lineages. Third, new lineages can be incorporated into the village by an extension of marriage ties, potentially bringing about "structural faults" within the lineages of that village. Fourth, men are obliged to marry a woman of a single, specific category, *suaböya*. This category defines a variety of women, two subcategories of which can be translated into the English biological equivalents MoBrDa and FaSiDa. Yąnomamö men prefer to marry women of these subcategories because they are relieved of much of the discomfort of avoiding their mothers-in-law.[8]

The ten partial genealogies shown in Fig. 3–2 show how the Yąnomamö actually marry. The genealogies have been selected with the intention of illustrating how the Yąnomamö reckon relationships between kinsmen in general, and between husband and wife in particular. All ten exemplify prescriptive marriage. They are more or less arranged in decreasing order of correspondence to our own biological concepts of kinship and illustrate the classificatory nature of their kinship system.

The people shown on these genealogies are (or were) real people. Many of the individuals in the examples are related to each other in such ways that all ten of the examples could be drawn as a single, unified genealogy.

The first eight examples are drawn from the village of Patanowä-teri; the last two are from Bisaasi-teri. In case J, for example, the fifth individual of the second generation is Kąobawä. To give a rough idea of the incompleteness of each genealogy, only one of Kąobawä's four marriages is shown and only one of his four children. None of his brothers and sisters are shown either, nor is the fact that he married a MoBrDa indicated.

Case A illustrates the identification procedure to be used in relating the genealogies to the text. There are three generations shown in case A; the first is symbolized by the Roman numeral I, the second, by II, the third, by III. Each individual in each generation is given a number; the number series runs from left to right and begins anew with 1 in each generation. Hence, every individual bears a generation number and a position-within-generation number. Case A illustrates the marriage of individuals III-1 to III-2;

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 63 ]

[7] *Mashi* means "species," "group," "cluster of similar things," and, in the context of kinship, "that group of people to whom I am related through males;" that is, "patrilineal kinsmen."

[8] I draw attention to the fact that the category is *prescribed*, but within it there are *preferences*. There are very few analyses of societies that have a prescriptive rule within which there are preferences, although Needham has devoted some attention to this interesting phenomenon (1962*a*, 1962*b*, and 1963).

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that is, the marriage of individuals 1 and 2 of the third generation. Although the ten examples are given primarily to illustrate the marriage of individuals of the most recent generation (3 or 4, depending on the number of generations in each example), in some cases additional marriages in ascending generations will be discussed. The point to remember for the time being is that the genealogies should be looked at from the most recent generation; the marriage pattern can be more readily seen in this fashion.

*Case A:* This exemplifies the *matrilateral cross-cousin* marriage, sometimes called MoBrDa marriage. Here, the Yąnomamö category *suaböya* corresponds exactly with our biological translation to MoBrDa. The man in question (III-1) would have called the woman *suaböya* whether or not he married her. Similarly, she would have addressed him by the term for husband: *bąroya.*

The marriage of III-1 to III-2 in this case also exemplifies *patrilateral cross-cousin* marriage, for the woman is related to her husband as FaSiDa as well. This is so because individuals II-1 and II-4 are siblings (brother and sister to each other) because their own fathers, in turn, were brothers. (Individual I-2 was an *adopted* brother to I-3, hence the broken sibling line connecting them.) When an individual marries a woman who is simultaneously his FaSiDa and MoBrDa, he is said to marry his *bilateral cross-cousin.* Case A illustrates the preferred form of marriage, for the man does not have to avoid his wife's parents as stringently as he would were they related to him in a different fashion. When a man's father-in-law is his MoBr, he is on extremely intimate terms with him and can even make jokes at his expense. The intimacy of the relationship between a man and his MoBr was brought home to me very indelibly on one occasion. A group of Patanowä-teri men visited Kąobawä, although their two villages were at war. One of the visitors was Kąobawä's wife's brother. After this man rested in a hammock for a few minutes, he got up and found Ariwari, Kąobawä's son. Ariwari was the visitor's sister's son. He played with him in the hammock and hugged him intimately (see Fig. 3-3). Ariwari fell asleep in his arms. This took place in spite of the fact that the visitors were in danger of being killed by other members of Kąobawä's group and narrowly escaped death on their previous visit. (See the section "Division of Labor and Daily Social Life" later in this chapter for a description of the incident.)

*Case B:* This illustrates the same kind of marriage that took place in Case A, except that the parents of the married people are half-siblings to each other. The Yąnomamö do not distinguish half-siblings from full siblings, so this situation is identical, as far as they are concerned, to the marriage in case A.

Case B also illustrates *sororal polygyny:* III-1 married two women who were related to each other as sisters.

Finally, it should be noted that the father of the man in question married a sister to individual II-3. They stood in wife-giver/wife-receiver relationship to each other and so do their children.

*Case C:* This illustrates the *patrilateral cross-cousin* marriage, that is, the FaSiDa marriage. Like the MoBrDa marriage, it is preferred because the man does not have to avoid his wife's parents. It is considered to be incestuous for a man to be familiar with his wife's mother if the woman is still sexually active. Hence, he must avoid her. If she is his FaSi, however, incest prohibitions pertaining to that kinswoman would automatically call forth appropriate behavior on his part, and the avoidance taboo is not stringent.

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606 123 [551] The avoidance taboo prohibits a man from saying his mother-in-law's name. My informants would be extremely embarrassed when I would say the name of their mother-in-law while collecting genealogies. Kąobawä, for example, would grin sheepishly and hide his head. Men must also avoid their mothers-in-law physically and should not look at them. If I took a group of people for a ride in my canoe, there would always be considerable shuffling of bodies so that the men could be situated in the canoe as far away from their mothers-in-law as possible.

128 602 595 Finally, case C illustrates another kind of sororal polygyny: Individuals III-1 and III-3 are sisters to each other because their mothers are sisters. (The equation stating that children of siblings of the same sex are themselves siblings extends indefinitely in the case of males, but breaks down in the case of females after two generations. This is because descent is patrilineal.)

128 582 602 *Case D:* This also is a case of FaSiDa marriage: I-2 and I-3 were brothers, so one of the parents of each of the third generation individuals were brother and sister to each other. Hence, III-1 married his FaSiDa.

128 595 602 *Case E:* The marriage of III-1 to III-2 is similar to the marriage in case D, but his marriage to the second wife, III-3, illustrates the use of another kinship equation. She is an actual sister to the first wife, but does not stand in the FaSiDa relationship to her husband. If one of the sisters is FaSiDa, however, then all of them are in Yąnomamö kinship usage.

128 582 602 [601] *Case F:* This illustrates how affinal ties replace consanguineal ties should the two conflict. III-1 can trace a blood tie to his wife, one that would prevent him from marrying her, but the affinal ties between his own father and the father of his wife permit him to marry according to the prescription. Individual III-1 would call all of his father's wives "mother." Hence, his own wife is, technically, MoBrDa.

128 582 587 602 *Case G:* This illustrates a number of marriage rules stated in the preceding examples. I present it as a sort of exercise to reinforce the logic of the Yąnomamö kinship equations given above. Individual II-6 married two brothers, II-5 and II-7, illustrating the *levirate*, the marriage between a man and his brother's widow. Individual II-9 married his FaSiDa (as in case F). Individuals III-3 and III-4 can marry because their fathers were cross-cousins (see case H, below). Individual III-5 married his FaSiDa, as was shown for the similar marriage in case E. Individual IV-1 married two women, each of whom is his FaSiDa. This is so because I-2 and I-4 were adopted brothers, so that their [597] sons (II-2 and II-4) were also siblings. Hence, IV-1 married his FaSiDa (IV-2) and, as in case E, her sister. His second wife is also FaSiDa because her mother (III-6) was a sister to III-2, since their respective fathers (II-9 and II-2) were (adopted) brothers.

128 582 601 602 *Case H:* This illustrates a very powerful marriage rule: The children of men who call each other *shoriwä* (brother-in-law) can marry. Practically speaking, in our kinship terms, the rule is that the children of cross-cousins stand in marriageable relationship to each other. II-2 and II-3 stand in wife-giver/wife-receiver relationship to each other and could exchange sisters in marriage. Their sons stand in the same relationship. Another important feature of Yąnomamö kinship and marriage rules is illustrated here. While III-1 married a woman of the prescribed category, he does not reckon his relationship to her patrilaterally or matrilaterally. That is, she is neither FaSiDa nor MoBrDa, but she is both! This emphasizes the fact that they marry primarily in terms of categories rather than by tracing biological ties, as I have done in the above examples. To the Yąnomamö,

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FaSiDa is the same as MoBrDa, and both are called by the same term, *suaböya*. Hence, to present the above examples as the Yąnomamö would explain them I would not have had to distinguish MoBrDa from FaSiDa, but rather would have had to use just one term; in every case presented, men married their *suaböya*. (This can be seen in the model shown in Fig. 3–1; each male married a woman who was simultaneously FaSiDa and MoBrDa, that is, *suaböya*, to him.)

*Cases I and J:* These are a little unusual, but I include them to give some idea of both the potentials of the Yąnomamö kinship system and the people who use it.

In case I, individual II–2 is the headman of Lower Bisaasi-teri, Kąobawä's "father." He has considerable authority in the group. He arbitrarily redefined some of his classificatory daughters as sisters *so that his sons could marry their daughters*. Thus, the marriage of IV–1 to IV–2 is now considered to be legitimate because IV–1 could call his wife's mother his mother-in-law (FaSi), since his father redefined her as sister. Otherwise, it would be incest. Most of the people adjusted their kinship usage to fit the circumstances, but Kąobawä, who gave me the details of the manipulation, refused to adjust his own terms. The redefined women in question are his sisters, and he refused to call them FaSi.

I came upon this, and several identical cases, when I learned that the kinship usage between specific individuals did not reflect the equations implied by genealogies. (After I had collected extensive genealogies on four villages, I spent a considerable amount of time collecting kinship terms from specific individuals for every one of the some two thousand individuals included in the genealogies. This served as a cross-check on the genealogies, but uncovered a large number of incestuous and other interesting marriages that I might not have pinpointed otherwise.)

Case J brings out the full potential of the classificatory nature of Yąnomamö kinship. The man (III–1) married his *suaböya* according to the Yąnomamö, although he was not related to her by any blood ties. The justification for the marriage is the fact that III–1 calls all the women to whom his father and his father's brothers are married by the term for mother. Hence, he married his MoBrDa.

THE LINEAGE It was shown in Chapter 1 that villages fission to produce new groups. One of the consequences of this pattern is that in a given area there will be a number of villages whose members can trace genealogical ties to each other because they have common male ancestors. Because of the classificatory nature of Yąnomamö kinship, the interrelated members of two different villages will use kinship terms for each other that imply a closeness of relationship. Thus, Kąobawä has "brothers" in all of the villages that have a common history with his own. These men are usually parallel cousins one or two degrees removed, but brothers in terminological categories. (The lineage to which Kąobawä belongs is shown on Fig. 3–5, discussed later as the *Sha* lineage.)

The Yąnomamö do not name their lineages. I have named all the significant lineages after particular male individuals, usually a long-since-dead male whose generation is the last for which I have meaningful genealogies. Thus, the *Sha* lineage is named after a man called *Shamathiadima*, long dead. He and his brothers left many male descendants who today are distributed in several villages. In the history of the movements of Kąobawä's village, the *Sha* lineage has figured prominently in the affairs of the group. Similarly, the *Hor* lineage is named after a man called *Horiborböwä*. The *Sha* and *Hor* lineages have a long history of marriage alliance and the living members of these two lineages constitute the greater fraction of the populations of Patanowä-teri, Monou-teri,

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of other villages—such alliances are stabilized by exchanges of women between the partners, a breach of the prescriptive marriage rules. It is for this reason that such a large discrepancy exists between the ideal behavior and the actual practice, as noted in Table 2.[18]

## Division of Labor and Daily Social Life

The daily activities and general social life are not as circumscribed by rules and regulations as would appear from the foregoing discussion. In fact, one first has the impression that chaos rather than order reigns over the daily activities of the village members![19] Thus, while ideal rules about behavior definitely exist, individuals have a great deal of freedom to manipulate their behavior in such a way that they are not unduly encumbered by them. Most of the run-of-the-mill activities of daily life are not characterized by inflexible prescriptions regarding proper behavior.

MALE-FEMALE DIVISION There are a number of distinctions based on status differences that are important in daily life. Perhaps the most conspicuous and most important is the distinction between males and females.

Yanomamö society is decidedly masculine. As was discussed earlier, there is a definite preference to have male children, resulting in a higher incidence of female infanticide as opposed to male infanticide. Female children assume duties and responsibilities in the household long before their brothers are obliged to participate in useful domestic tasks. For the most part, little girls are obliged to tend their younger brothers and sisters, although they are also expected to help their mothers in other chores such as cooking, hauling water, and collecting firewood. By the time girls have reached puberty they have already learned that their world is decidedly less attractive than that of their brothers.

As members of local descent groups, girls have almost no voice in the decisions reached by their agnates concerning their marriage. They are largely pawns to be disposed of by their kinsmen, and their wishes are given very little consideration. In many cases, the girl has been promised to a man long before she reaches puberty, and in some cases her husband actually raises her for part of her childhood. In short, they do not participate as equals in the political affairs of the corporate kinship group and seem to inherit most of the duties without enjoying many of the privileges.

Marriage does not enhance the status of the girl, for her duties as wife require her to assume difficult and laborious tasks too menial to be executed by the men. For the most part these include the incessant demands for firewood and drinking water, particularly the former. Women spend several hours each day scouring the neighborhood

[18] Reducing kinship usage to the logical extremes to which the Yanomamö take it, there really is no discrepancy between theory and practice, except in the case of incest. When new villages enter into contact for the first time, their respective headmen call each other *shoriwä* (brother-in-law). The first exchanges between the groups usually involve the children of these men. The children, of course, stand in marriageable relationship to each other because the children of brothers-in-law can, by the prescriptive definitions, marry.

[19] Many fieldworkers do not begin to see the patterns of behavior until they have spent months of intensive contact with their subjects. I was convinced, after five or six months, that there were almost no guidelines for behavior. A part of the difficulty resulted from the language barrier. The patterns began to emerge only after about six months, and only then could I begin asking pertinent questions about many features of social organization.

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most common way for a child's soul to escape is to leave by way of the mouth when the child cries. Thus, mothers are quick to hush a bawling baby in order to prevent its soul from escaping. The child's soul can be recovered by sweeping the ground in the vicinity where it most probably escaped, calling for it while sweeping the area with a particular kind of branch. I once helped gather up the soul of a sick child in this fashion, luring it back into the sick baby. One of the contributions I made, in addition to helping with the calling and sweeping, was a dose of medicine for the child's diarrhea. A consequence of this set of attitudes about the vulnerability of children is that much of the village's activity with respect to shamanism and curing is directed toward the children.

RELATIVES BY BLOOD AND BY MARRIAGE Many forms of interpersonal behavior stem largely from the social roles implied in the kinship system. To be sure, some kinship behavior reflects the two distinctions of age and sex discussed above, for the terminology of kinship itself employs discriminations of this kind. For example, there are terms to distinguish older siblings from younger siblings and terms used by members of one sex only in reference to those of the opposite sex.

The relationship between kinship terms and biological parentage is not the same in the Yąnomamö language as it is in our own. As was shown in the first section of this chapter, people may stand in a child relationship to a number of individuals; that is, it is possible to have multiple "mothers" and "fathers" in Yąnomamö society. The term for mother and father conveys as much of a social as a biological relationship between individuals, and in the daily activities of the Yąnomamö it is the social implications of kinship roles that are most important.

What is implied in the kinship roles can best be seen in the way the kinship terms themselves are formed. All primary kinship terms take the ending *"-mou"* when used to describe the relationship between individuals. Thus, *osbeya* means "my younger sibling," but *osbemou* means that individual X *behaves* toward individual Y *as a younger sibling.* This ending, *-mou*, also occurs in nonkinship usage to express "a way of behaving," "to execute a particular activity in a specified manner," or "to perform the activity that is implied by the word to which *-mou* is affixed." For example, *oko* means fresh-water crab and *okomou* means "to go hunting for crabs"; *bowashi* means "a mischievous white monkey" and *bowashimou* means "to act mischievously, to monkey around"; *nowa naba* means "enemy," and *nowa nabamou* means "to become an enemy by behaving objectionably"; *waiteri* means "fierce" and *waiterimou* means "to behave ferociously."

Whenever I would ask the Yąnomamö a question such as, "What do you call Kąobawä?" the answers would always be in the form of a kinship term to which *"-mou"* was affixed, but rarely in the form "I say such-and-such to him." Calling an individual by a specific term is, however, implied in the "way of behaving" toward that individual. But despite the fact that the Yąnomamö can say, literally, "I call him father" (*kama kä iba, baya ya kuu*), they invariably say *"ya bǫ̈mou"*—"I behave toward him as a child."[20] Thus, they express their relationships to others in terms of *ways of behavior.* Each kinship category implies a set of these behavioral norms, and one's social life in the community is established with respect to all other individuals by the kinship terminology employed in each particular case.

[20]Although the word *bǫ̈* translates literally as "father," the expression *ya bǫ̈mou* can best be understood with the translation given above.

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New individuals are incorporated into the community by an extension of kinship ties. Unless one is incorporated into the village in this fashion, there is no basis for social behavior vis-à-vis others, for the kinship system defines one's role in society. An orphaned teen-ager joined Kąobawä's group shortly before I began my fieldwork. He was from a distant Shamatari village and had no blood relatives in Kąobawä's group. He established his position in the community by calling Kąobawä "father." This defined his relationship to all of Kąobawä's kinsmen as well. As an exercise in kinship, I had the young man give me his relationship term for everyone in the village. He not only had specific terms for every member of the group, but he had also extended them to all the residents of Lower Bisaasi-teri and Monou-teri as well, since Kąobawä was related to these people. In short, the boy learned how Kąobawä was related to all the members of three different villages and logically extended his own assumed relationship to Kąobawä outward to the others; and he behaved toward them accordingly: He avoided women he called mother-in-law and refrained from sexual activities with women he called sister.

To emphasize the fact that the kinship categories do not always correspond to biological relationships, let me give an example of an incestuous marriage. Kąobawä's younger brother, Shiimima, recently (1966) took a young girl for his wife, outraging most of the community because he "behaved toward her as brother" before the marriage. The girl's mother had been abducted some twenty years earlier from a distant village and was given to a man who stood in a father relationship to Kąobawä and Shiimima. Thus, both Kąobawä and Shiimima called the abducted woman "mother" and called her daughter "sister." The abducted woman's husband died of malaria; after this, she had a number of temporary affairs with other men before being officially taken as a wife by another man in the village. Her daughter is the issue of a temporary affair she had with the headman of Mahekodo-teri, the group that gave Kąobawä refuge after the treacherous feast in 1950. She is, therefore, biologically unrelated to Kąobawä and Shiimima, but since they behaved toward her as brothers, Shiimima's marriage to her is a blatant case of incest. The matter was as disgusting to my informants as it would have been had Shiimima married his own biological sister.

There are many important kinship distinctions in Yąnomamö social life, but the one between relatives by marriage and agnatic relatives should particularly be emphasized. This distinction is at the basis of Yąnomamö political behavior and village fissioning. This point was emphasized in the discussion of village fissioning and marriage rules in the first section of this chapter.

One of the most important characteristics of affinal ties is that they are capable of growing in strength over time because they can be solidified and reinforced by marriage exchanges between the groups. Ties between agnates, on the other hand, tend to weaken over time. For example, Kąobawä's local descent group could renew its friendship to similar affinally related groups in the village of Patanowä-teri by entering into marriage exchanges with them once again. There is no way, however, in which his own descent group could reinforce or strengthen the agnatic ties with the local descent groups of the *Sba* lineage in Patanowä-teri. By marrying into the affinally related Patanowä-teri descent groups, Kąobawä's group would enter into direct competition with agnatic counterparts in that village, further straining the relationships between the two communities.

There is another way of looking at this situation. Men who are related to each other as agnates (for example, brothers and parallel cousins) get along well with each

602 other when they are children and young men. As time passes and these men become old
571 enough to seek wives, members of the groups to which they belong enter into competi-
602 tion with each other. The men themselves are under some pressure to display their per-
571 sonal autonomy, and they treat each other with considerable reserve as they get older.
578 They cannot boss each other around or expect many favors from one another. Kąobawä, for example, cannot ask his adult brothers to perform menial tasks for him. This is because each man—particularly those men who compete for the same women—attempts to convince all others that he is capable of ferocity. The more remote the genealogical distance, the greater is the reserve with which mature agnates treat each other. That is, distant parallel cousins would behave toward each other with considerably more reserve than would actual brothers, although the men in question are all related to each other terminologically as brothers. If such men live in different villages, their mutual relationships are even more reserved when they meet.

602 The relationship between men who call each other brother-in-law, however, grows
607 more intimate as the men get older. They can play and joke with each other, whereas
571 agnates cannot, for they are not competitors and are not constrained to exhibit their
581 fierceness to each other. They can cement their relationships to each other by merely
582 promising to give their daughters to each other's sons. They can ask favors of each other, expecting them to be done without complaint.

602 Kąobawä's relationships to two men in his village illustrate the distinction be-
[601] tween agnates and affines. Both men joined his group from the village of Patanowä-teri some time after Kąobawä's group separated from the village. One of the men, Nadesiwä, is related to him agnatically: they call each other "brother" because their fathers were [613] half-brothers. Nadesiwä is in Kąobawä's local descent group, but is not quite on a par [581] with the other members in the political affairs of the group. The other men in the [582] group—Kąobawä and his closer brothers—put pressure on Nadesiwä to give his only daughter to a man in a distant Shamatari village for the purpose of stabilizing an alliance. This was a considerable sacrifice for him to make, as his daughter, after the [591] completion of bride service, will have to live in her husband's village—Nadesiwä will [606] have no coresident son-in-law to provide him with meat when he gets old. Kąobawä and Nadesiwä treat each other with respect and great reserve and do not ask each other for favors.

602 The other man, Kumamawä, is Bahimi's actual brother; Kąobawä is related to
607 him, therefore, as an affine as well as by cognatic kinship ties. That is, they are first [594] cross-cousins by blood and also related to each other by marriage. Kumamawä is a [613] frequent visitor in Kąobawä's house and enthusiastically executes the numerous tasks that Kąobawä asks of him. They are members of different local descent groups, but their groups are related to each other by marriage exchanges that go back several generations. In short, Kąobawä's personal ties to his brother-in-law are warmer and friendlier than his relationship to one of the members of his own local descent group.

## Daily Activities

361 Kąobawä's village is oval-shaped. His house is located among those of his
342 agnatic kinsmen; they occupy a continuous arc along one side of the village. Each of the